

***Remarks***

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-13 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 11 being the independent claims. Claims 7-9, 12, and 13 were withdrawn from consideration until a generic claim is found to be allowable. Since claims 7-9, 12, and 13 depend from claim 1, which is generic and is now believed to be in condition for allowance, these claims should be considered and should be allowed. The presented changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

***Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102***

Claims 1, 6, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Acker (U.S. Patent No. 1,802,545). Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define the support member, and should now be in condition for allowance. Specifically, the shape of the support member relative to the differential pinion has been more accurately defined. The present bull gear has a plate-like support member supporting a differential pinion. The Acker's bull gear, to the contrary, has a case-like support member such as to enclose a differential pinion. Further, the support member of the present bull gear has a thickness that is smaller than the maximum diameter of the differential pinion, and is opened at opposite side surfaces so as to have the differential pinion projecting outward

from the side surfaces. Whereas the case-like support member of Acker's bull gear is expanded and encloses the differential pinion.

Claims 6 and 10 depend from, and add features to claim 1. Therefore, claims 6 and 10 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

***Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103***

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acker in view of Koltookian (U.S. Patent No. 4,688,962). Claim 2 depends from, and adds features to claim 1. Therefore, claim 2 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 3-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acker in view of Koltookian (U.S. Patent No. 4,688,962) and further in view of Thoma (U.S. Patent No. 6,595,887). Claims 3-5 depend from, and add features to claim 1. Therefore, claims 3-5 should be allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

***Other Matters***

Claim 11 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 11 has been rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 11 should therefore be allowable.

As stated above, claims 7-9, 12, and 13 depend from generic claim 1. Claim 1 should be in condition for allowance, thus claims 7-9, 12, and 13 should be allowed.

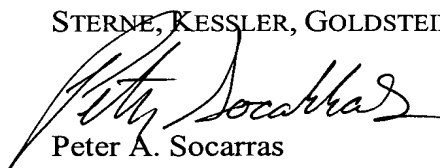
***Conclusion***

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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